

BUDGET 2002

THE RIGHT DECISIONS FOR CHALLENGING TIMES



THIRD QUARTER ACTIVITY REPORT

2002-03 QUARTERLY BUDGET REPORT

Updating Albertans

The government has three core businesses that make up its overall business plan and that guide government in its decision-making on behalf of Albertans. The core businesses are:

- **PEOPLE** - The goals for the *People* core business are directed at improving the quality of life in Alberta for individuals and their families through the government's priorities for health, education, our children, those in need, and Aboriginal Albertans.
- **PROSPERITY** - The goals for the *Prosperity* core business focus on protecting the quality of life in Alberta through the government's priorities for our economy, work force and work places, infrastructure, value-added industries, export trade and financial and fiscal position.
- **PRESERVATION** - The goals for the *Preservation* core business reflect the government's priorities for community safety, our renewable resources, the environment, our natural, historical and cultural resources, and Alberta's relations with other levels of government.

The purpose of quarterly Activity Reports is to show Albertans what activities the government undertook in the third quarter of this fiscal year in support of People, Prosperity and Preservation. The following pages include some of those activities from each of the government departments.

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LISTENING TO ALBERTANS

The activities that support Alberta's core businesses are often influenced by the input government receives from Albertans. Through public consultation, surveys, letters, phone calls, and e-mails, Albertans tell government what's important to them and what concerns them. In the Third Quarter, Albertans had a say as government:

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- **enhanced** the Agriculture Disaster Assistance Loan program by extending it to June 30, 2003. Farmers impacted by natural disaster, received a decreased loan rate of 5% from the previous 7%. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
 - **completed** the province-wide consultation "Looking Forward: Planning for the Future with the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund." (Revenue)
 - **consulted** Albertans on Alberta's Climate Change Action Plan. (Environment)
 - **responded** to recommendations of the MLA Committee to Review Low-Income Programs by extending supplementary health coverage to parents leaving the Supports for Independence program for employment. (Human Resources and Employment)
 - **received** over 200 formal responses from the public and stakeholders on the government MLA policing review report. Government will now review the report, its recommendations and the responses received. (Solicitor General)
 - **released** the *Alberta Disability Strategy*. The proposed strategy from the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities includes recommendations to assist persons with disabilities obtain the support they need to participate more fully in all aspects of Alberta society. (Community Development)
 - **developed** an action plan for reviewing and improving some of the department's procurement/contracting policies and practices. (Infrastructure)
 - **held** consultations for the *Protection for Persons in Care Act* Legislative Review. Approximately 200 stakeholders participated in sessions and nearly 300 Albertans provided written responses. (Community Development)
 - **received** a report submitted by the MLA Committee considering a review of the *Labour Relations Code*. (Human Resources and Employment)
 - **launched** consultations with Albertans on proposed changes to the *Public Trustee Act*. The *Act* protects the financial interests of vulnerable Albertans by administering the estates of dependent adults, deceased persons and minors when there is no one else to act. (Justice and Attorney General)
 - **participated** in an open house on upcoming seasonal petroleum activity with the Dene Tha' First Nation. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
 - **conducted** 45 roundtable discussions with 45 commercial lending clients and Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC). (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)

- **participated** in the November 2002 Chiefs' Summit, which included discussions surrounding the Kyoto Protocol and consultation. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
- **responded** to over 25,000 calls to the Alberta Seniors Information Line. (Seniors)
- **provided** advice and information to more than 45,000 Albertans on registries, landlord-tenant matters and consumer issues through the Government Services call centre. (Government Services)
- **responded** to more than 5,700 requests for information from the Alberta Seniors Information Service Centres. (Seniors)
- **completed** public consultations on the *Residential Tenancies Act* and the Mobile Home Sites Tenancies Act. More than 1,300 responses were received. (Government Services)
- **completed** consultations with Alberta's charities and religious groups on the province's charitable gaming licensing process and use of proceeds guidelines. (Gaming)
- **held** a series of focus groups in Alberta communities to solicit feedback on the draft strategic plan for the Alberta Foundation for the Arts. (Community Development)
- **requested** written submissions on a discussion paper dealing with automobile insurance in Alberta. Stakeholders were invited to provide input to shape possible changes to the *Insurance Act*. (Finance)
- **established** stakeholder working groups to review the new tax assessment rates for regulated industrial property such as oil wells and pipelines. (Municipal Affairs)
- **completed** the Recreation Corridors Legislative Review public consultation process. The consultation included almost 600 stakeholders, 1,000 workbook responses and a provincial stakeholders' forum. (Community Development)
- **responded** to requests from hunters with disabilities and introduced a regulation allowing severely handicapped hunters to obtain better access to hunting opportunities. (Sustainable Resource Development)
- **consulted** stakeholders on the Dependent Adults Regulations and the Personal Directives Regulation to ensure both provide streamlined processes and clarity of terms. (Human Resources and Employment)
- **received** Albertans' comments on the Fines and Demerit Points discussion paper, the final paper to help draft regulations for the new *Traffic Safety Act*. (Transportation)
- **conducted** open houses in Grande Prairie, Strathcona County, Calgary, and Hinton to gain feedback from local residents and stakeholders as well as provide information about upcoming projects. (Transportation)
- **met** with operators of duty-free stores on the issue of tobacco tax and developed educational material for consumers. (Revenue)

PEOPLE

The following activities support the *People* core business and particularly areas that Albertans have identified as priority areas including health, education and children.

Promoting Health and Wellness

The state of Alberta's health care system is a priority for all Albertans. The Alberta Government continues to search for innovative ideas and initiatives to improve the sustainability of the health system and reassure Albertans that their health care needs will be addressed. In this quarter, the government continued to focus on the health of Albertans as it:

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- **launched** the campaign *It's time to tell the truth about tobacco*. The campaign is a joint venture between AADAC and Alberta Health and Wellness which aims to reduce the number of young people starting to use tobacco, encourage and help current tobacco users to quit, and reduce non-smokers' exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke. (Health and Wellness)
 - **proclaimed** The *North Red Deer Water Authorization Act*. This legislation enabled the communities of Blackfalds, Lacombe, Ponoka and the First Nations at Hobbema to construct and operate a pipeline that will supply residents with drinking water from treatment facilities in Red Deer. (Environment)
 - **provided** \$350,000 in funding, via the Alberta Science and Research Authority (ASRA), toward the COMPRU/Westaim/ASRA Chair in Interfacial Biomechanics. This research chair enables research to develop more effective methods of treating people requiring reconstruction of the head and neck as a result of disease or injury. (Innovation and Science)
 - **provided** \$2.5 million to a central production facility for pharmaceuticals. The facility, one of the first of its kind in Canada, offers a safe and efficient location for the preparation of pharmaceuticals for acute care patients in the Calgary Health Region. (Infrastructure)
 - **proclaimed** the *Traffic Safety Act*. The new *Act* contains a number of initiatives to enhance safety on Alberta's roads, such as graduated licensing for new drivers. (Transportation)
 - **released** the *Alberta Brain Injury Network Survival Guide*. The guide was developed by people within the brain injury community and provides information about support and resources available in Alberta for adults with acquired brain injury and their families. (Community Development)
 - **opened** the \$5 million Mountain View Centre in Hinton. This two-story facility has 25 continuing care beds and 27 supportive housing units. The Centre is the result of a public-private partnership between the WestView Health Authority, the Good Samaritan Society, and the Government of Alberta. (Infrastructure)
 - **detected** the first human case of West Nile Virus (WNV) in Alberta. The announcement provided Albertans with information on WNV and offered advice on how to prevent contracting the disease. (Health and Wellness)
 - **coordinated** a project with health regions and post-secondary institutions for a pilot health care practicum placement program. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)

Supporting Education and Lifelong Learning

The Alberta Government supports learning as a lifelong process and offers Albertans access to a variety of learning opportunities. In the third quarter, the provincial government honoured its commitment to education and lifelong learning as it:

- **amended** legislation to pay the teachers' portion of the unfunded pension liability for a one-year period. This one-time \$60 million commitment is part of the April 2002 good-faith agreement. (Learning)
- **introduced** some of Alberta's top researchers to Alberta school children via a wall calendar and interactive web site during Science and Technology week. This event is designed to encourage youth to consider a career in the sciences. (Innovation and Science)
- **established** five stakeholder committees to follow up on the recommendations identified by the Minister's School Symposium. The committees' work is expected to be complete by spring 2003. (Infrastructure)
- **facilitated** the promotion of the Alberta Science and Technology Leadership Awards Foundation's "ASTech Awards." Awards go to outstanding individuals and organizations that have contributed significantly to the success of science and technology in Alberta. (Innovation and Science)
- **produced and distributed** a new teaching resource manual for Grade 10 Social Studies teachers to educate students about the Canadian justice system. (Justice and Attorney General, Learning, Solicitor General)
- **launched** a \$3-million training program for Alberta's food processing industry. This sector, which currently employs 23,000 people, identified the need for 18,000 new employees over the next five years. (Agriculture Food and Rural Development, Human Resources and Employment, Learning)
- **piloted** *Up Close and Palaeo* with grade six students in Wetaskiwin. This program, developed by the Royal Tyrrell Museum, enables students to have their dinosaur questions answered by experts via live videoconference technology. (Community Development)
- **coordinated** a number of studies under the Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse Project, an initiative based on a partnership with five northern colleges. The studies will link employment demands in northern Alberta with post-secondary education. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
- **initiated** the first meeting of the Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Youth Advisory Committee. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)

- **awarded** the 2002 Persons Case Scholarships to seven post-secondary students whose studies and career goals will ultimately contribute to the advancement of women, or who are studying in fields where members of their gender are traditionally few in number. Scholarships ranged from \$2,000 to \$4,000. (Community Development)
- **led** a delegation of representatives of Alberta's education community on a mission to Asia to strengthen and expand international education initiatives. (Learning)
- **opened** the Ancient Rome exhibit at the Provincial Museum of Alberta. (Community Development)
- **teamed up** with British Columbia's Ministry of Education to strengthen the provinces' learning systems by seeking partnerships and sharing collective resources. (Learning)
- **awarded** \$165,000 in scholarships to recognize registered Alberta apprentices who demonstrate excellence in their trade. These scholarships were provided by industry, the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board and Alberta Learning. (Learning)
- **increased** the amount of scholarship money available for Alexander Rutherford Heritage Scholarships by \$2 million to address an increase in eligible applicants. (Learning)
- **offered** grade nine students the opportunity to join the workforce on Take Our Kids to Work Day. (Learning, Human Resources and Employment)
- **recognized** 50 Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) students for their achievements on the job and in the classroom by awarding \$1,000 scholarships to assist them with their on-going apprenticeship training. The RAP Scholarships are funded in partnership with the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board. (Learning)
- **encouraged** Albertans to nominate creative, innovative and effective teachers for the 2003 Excellence in Teaching Awards. (Learning)
- **solicited** interest for the Municipal Internship Program. Municipalities approved for internships receive a \$30,000 grant towards salary and expenses to provide training and work experiences for people interested in municipal administration careers. (Municipal Affairs)
- **provided** information related to funding, careers and career planning to 77,900 individuals through Labour Market Information Centres and resource centres in Edmonton. (Human Resources and Employment)
- **coordinated** activities for Waste Reduction Week (October 21-27). This week highlighted waste education initiatives and actions that benefit the environment. (Environment)
- **collaborated** with other provinces and territories in the development of a report that identified where the federal government could help provinces and territories meet challenges in learning and labour market training. (Human Resources and Employment)

Supporting Families and Children

Every government ministry is responsible for initiatives that contribute to an environment where Alberta families can succeed and flourish. In this quarter, the government:

- **announced** a \$5.6 million investment to strengthen child care standards and provide supports to families. Introduction of an accreditation system will improve standards and promote excellence in child care, as well as help families select the best child care setting for their children. (Children's Services)
- **passed** the *Adult Interdependent Relationships Act*. The new legislation addresses the financial and property responsibilities and benefits of people in unmarried, but economically and emotionally interdependent relationships. This includes common-law and committed platonic relationships where two people agree to share emotional and economic responsibilities. (Justice and Attorney General)
- **released** the *Child Welfare Act* review report entitled *Strengthening Families, Children and Youth*. Highlights of the 55 recommendations include: legislation for the Resources for Children with Disabilities program, a focus on finding permanent homes for children in government care, an emphasis on family involvement in child welfare cases, increased Aboriginal involvement in the decision-making process, extending maintenance for youth in government care to age 22, increasing access to adoption records and a recommendation to broaden the role of the Children's Advocate. (Children's Services)
- **launched** a pilot project between Alberta Children's Services and the Alberta Liquor Store Association. The initiative, designed to prevent Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), features a series of educational posters about FAS prevention alongside displays of non-alcoholic alternatives in liquor stores throughout the province. (Children's Services)
- **provided** approximately \$7.3 million in grants to support the housing needs of low income families, seniors, people with special needs and the homeless. (Seniors)
- **opened** a joint Child and Family Services Centre in Lloydminster. The Saskatchewan Social Services' Child and Family Services branch and Alberta's Ribstone Child and Family Services Authority are now housed in the same building. This unique partnership provides one point of contact to access services such as parenting help, community resources, child-care subsidies and services for children with disabilities. (Children's Services)
- **opened** child friendly witness and courtroom facilities in Edmonton's Provincial Court. These facilities will help make testifying in court easier and less frightening for children and will prevent child victims from seeing the accused while testifying. (Justice and Solicitor General)

- **approved** approximately 3,700 applications from lower-income seniors under the Special Needs Assistance for Seniors program for a total of \$6.8 million (the average benefit was \$1,900). This is a 35 per cent increase in the number of applications approved during the same period last year. (Seniors)
- **collaborated** with the cross-ministry Youth in Transition Coordinating Committee in the review of support systems for youth-at-risk as they make their transition to adulthood. (Human Resources and Employment)
- **approved** 80 applications for funding under the Home Adaptation Program for a total of \$386,730. These grants assist homeowners or tenants in completing modifications to improve access and mobility within their residences. (Seniors)
- **processed** over 2,300 new applications under the Alberta Seniors Benefit program. (Seniors)
- **paid** approximately \$37.8 million to over 125,000 seniors under the Alberta Seniors Benefit program. The average monthly cash benefit was \$101 per senior. (Seniors)

PROSPERITY

The following activities support the *Prosperity* core business and contribute to a better quality of life for Albertans.

Strengthening the Alberta Economy

Alberta is expected to lead the country in economic growth in 2002-2003 and various government ministries are involved in a number of initiatives to ensure that trend continues.

In this Quarter, the government:

- **developed** a comprehensive strategy to address the potential ratification of the Kyoto Protocol. This strategy included a public awareness campaign about the Kyoto Protocol, in addition to intergovernmental, legal and constitutional analysis of Kyoto and its possible impact. (International and Intergovernmental Relations, Energy, Environment, and the Public Affairs Bureau)
- **launched** the “Innovation Series” business development seminars designed to teach small and medium companies how to manage the development of new technologies and how to take innovations to market. (Innovation and Science)
- **moved** towards the 2002-03 target of \$30 million in land sales with 42 surplus properties being sold or having unconditional offers for a total of \$16.8 million. (Infrastructure)
- **released** *Albertans & Climate Change - Taking Action*. This strategy includes key thrusts related to technology and innovation, carbon management, energy conservation, renewable energy, carbon sinks, and adaptation. (Environment)
- **continued** to defend Alberta’s forestry practices in response to the U.S. softwood lumber trade action. Alberta also continued to participate in Canada’s NAFTA and WTO challenges on the softwood lumber dispute. (International and Intergovernmental Relations)
- **represented** Alberta’s interests to the federal government, U.S. government officials, and World Trade Organization officials on issues such as free trade negotiations, tariff reductions, the U.S. Farm Bill, wheat exports to the U.S., margarine production, and other issues. (International and Intergovernmental Relations)
- **processed** a total of \$161 million in safety net support payments under the grasshopper control, farm water and Farm Income Assistance programs (FIAP). As of December 31, 2002, 83% of the \$324 million allocated for FIAP in 2002 was paid. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **attracted** investment in green power projects in the Fort MacLeod and McBride areas, which will make Alberta the #1 wind-producing province in Canada. (Energy)
- **promoted** Alberta as a strong investment opportunity and a stable and secure supplier of oil and gas during Premier Klein’s trip to New York. (International and Intergovernmental Relations and Economic Development)
- **addressed** issues regarding inaccurate electricity billing problems. Regulated Rate Option customers being served by EPCOR in the Aquila service area may now lodge a complaint with a special Alberta Energy and Utilities Board (EUB) call centre. (Energy)

- **announced** a \$63 million highway twinning project under the Strategic Highway Infrastructure Program (partnership with Transport Canada). The project involves twinning 50 kilometres of Highway 43 northwest of Edmonton. This highway is part of the North-South Trade Corridor. (Transportation)
- **released** a report on the potential for developing coalbed methane (natural gas trapped in coal seams) in Alberta. The government will review existing natural gas development policies and consider stakeholder views on the development of this unconventional energy resource through external consultation. (Energy)
- **passed** the *Alberta Wheat and Barley Test Market Act*. This Bill allows the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development to enter into an agreement with the federal government and/or with the Canada Wheat Board to put in place a test open market in Alberta. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **followed up** on Premier Klein's mission to Ukraine by coordinating the work of various departments and agencies on joint projects involving agriculture, health care and education. (International and Intergovernmental Relations)
- **worked** with a multitude of organizations in assisting Hay West organizers and others in the distribution and management of providing feed to Alberta producers affected by drought. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **designed and facilitated** a process involving more than 70 rural Albertans from east central communities to discuss economic development and rural sustainability opportunities. (Community Development and Economic Development)
- **organized** a ministerial trade and investment mission to Tokyo, Japan and Beijing, China to promote Alberta's strong economy, the many business and investment advantages it offers and the world-renowned capabilities of Alberta companies. (Economic Development)
- **provided** \$22.5 million to Alberta farmers for Crop Insurance, native pasture, straight hail and wildlife compensation claims through the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC). (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **increased** the personal tax exemption from \$13,339 to \$13,525, the highest basic personal exemption in the country. (Finance)
- **paid** approximately \$32 million to 1450 applicants through the Farm Income Disaster Program and the Canadian Farm Income Program through the AFSC. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **provided** \$26.5 million in Beginning Farmer, Developing Farmer and Disaster loans to farmers, and facilitated \$39.4 million in investment in small business and agribusiness loans. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **released** the *Second Quarter Fiscal Update* which forecasts a balanced budget despite additional provisions for disaster assistance and lower than anticipated investment income. (Finance)
- **updated** Albertans on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund's Second Quarter performance. (Revenue)
- **held** a Regional Economic Development Alliance (REDA) Conference with over 100 delegates from across Alberta to discuss lessons learned in the development of regional alliances, the challenges they face, and practices in regional development. (Economic Development)
- **participated** in the inaugural meeting of federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for immigration to address issues such as skill shortages, annual immigration targets, and integration of immigrants and refugees into Canadian society. (Learning)
- **hosted** the Alberta-Belgium Business & Technology Forum in Calgary. Additional meetings held before and after the forum laid the groundwork for further cooperation between Belgian and Alberta companies and research organizations. (Innovation and Science)
- **initiated** an economic partnership with Tribal Chiefs Ventures Inc., industry and government. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
- **completed** a framework for managing congestion on Alberta's electricity system through the EUB to provide continued reliable electricity service for Albertans. (Energy)

- **developed** a fire salvage strategy to reclaim timber from the 247,000-hectare House River Fire and issued more than 20 dispositions to conduct fire salvage operations. (Sustainable Resource Development)
- **established** an agreement with the Alberta Restaurant and Foodservice Association to assist Alberta Human Resources and Employment clients with disabilities find employment within the restaurant and foodservice industry. (Human Resources and Employment)
- **implemented** the First Nations Training-to-Employment program. This program supports First Nations people living on reserve to acquire training and find employment. (Human Resources and Employment)
- **implemented** the NHL Players Tax which is expected to generate up to \$2.5 million a year for each team in Alberta. (Revenue)

Improving Efficiency and Innovation

Albertans have worked hard to establish our province as a leader in technology and innovation.

In addition the government is constantly examining ways in which it can provide services to Albertans more efficiently. In this quarter, the government:

- **announced** the reduction of 17 health regions into nine. Larger regions will provide the population size, facilities and resources to meet a wider range of health care needs, as well as help attract and retain health professionals. Regions can take advantage of more opportunities to collaborate, innovate and achieve cost efficiencies. Boundaries come into effect April 1, 2003. (Health and Wellness)
- **released** a draft *Framework Proposal for an Alberta Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program*. Information gathered under a provincial reporting program would assist both the province and industry in characterizing emission sources and identifying opportunities for emission reductions. (Environment)
- **introduced** the highest small claims court limit in Canada. Alberta raised the small claims court limit from \$7,500 to \$25,000. The increase will allow more Albertans to pursue claims in Provincial Court, which features simplified procedures that often allow people to appear without legal representation. (Justice and Attorney General)
- **provided** \$14 million in funding for collaborative, high-tech research at the Calgary Centre for Innovative Technology, located at the University of Calgary. Research teams are working to find solutions for problems facing society and industry in five areas: health of the aging population; resource development and utilization; deteriorating infrastructure; next-generation intelligent technologies; and environmental impact. (Innovation and Science)
- **issued** a Request for Proposal to purchase at least 25 per cent of the electricity used in government-owned facilities from green power sources beginning in 2005. (Infrastructure)
- **entered** into negotiations with Earth Tech (Canada) Inc. to operate the Swan Hills Treatment Centre on a long-term basis. (Infrastructure)
- **renewed** a Memorandum of Understanding with the Northwest Territories for cooperation and development. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
- **partnered** with Innovation and Science and the federal government to ensure Aboriginal and First Nations' schools will be eligible for the SuperNet service. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)

- **implemented** the first web-based tax return filing system for the NHL players' tax program. (Revenue)
- **invested** in new technology (Vapex Process) to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 85% during heavy oil extraction. The Alberta Energy Research Institute contributed \$7.5 million to this initiative. (Innovation and Science)
- **released** the Committee on Innovation and Collaboration's report. The government will implement 49 of the 50 recommendations aimed at making regional health authorities more collaborative, innovative and accountable. (Health and Wellness)
- **announced** the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP). This program will expedite the immigration process for health care professionals who can fill occupations that have experienced shortages in the province. (Health and Wellness)
- **established** an MLA committee to review government rules and policies in an effort to reduce roadblocks and red tape in the delivery of services to Albertans. (Government Services)
- **implemented** natural gas liquids royalty changes to ensure Albertans continue to receive full and fair value on the ethane, propane, butanes and pentanes contained in natural gas. (Energy)
- **explored** the latest advances and possibilities in virtual education by holding the sixth annual Online Learning Symposium. (Learning)
- **participated** on an inter-provincial committee to examine options for a proposed harmonization of film and video classification in Canada. (Community Development)
- **implemented** the Internet-based Petroleum Registry of Alberta. This \$25 million investment transforms the way information is shared between the oil and gas industry, the Department of Energy and the EUB. This registry will contribute to the industry's competitiveness in the global marketplace. (Energy)
- **embarked** on a process to review the *Municipal Government Act* in partnership with the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association and the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties. (Municipal Affairs)
- **implemented** the Contract Management Administration System (CMAS), a web-based application that will ensure greater consistency in the management, monitoring and evaluation of contracts across government. (Human Resources and Employment)
- **developed** oil and gas application maps for Aboriginal communities and trappers to enable them to readily identify any impediments to proposed resource development that could affect Treaty rights on Crown land (for example, Native burial grounds on a site where oil and gas development is being proposed). (Energy)
- **issued** a Request for Qualifications from respondents interested in undertaking the development, design, construction, financing, ownership and property management of the new law courts in Calgary. (Infrastructure)

PRESERVATION

The following activities support the *Preservation* core business by ensuring Alberta's communities are strong and safe and Alberta's natural, cultural and historical resources are protected.

Building Stronger and Safer Communities

Albertans take pride in their communities. They require leadership from government on issues of safety, and flexibility from government on determining what initiatives will best strengthen their communities. The government supported numerous initiatives that improved safety and helped build stronger communities. In the third quarter of 2002-2003, the Alberta government:

- **implemented** an emergency warning system to help locate children who have been abducted. Known as AMBER Alert, the initiative is a voluntary program between broadcasters and police services designed to send emergency warnings to the public immediately following an abduction. (Solicitor General and Municipal Affairs)
- **held** a conference called *Crisis Management - an Alberta Perspective*, which provided information about the province's intelligence-led crisis-management process and how it coordinates the efforts of all partners across the private and public sector and all orders for government to protect the lives of Albertans. More than 350 first responders attended the conference. (Solicitor General and Municipal Affairs)
- **passed** the *Security Management Statutes Amendment Act* to protect the safety and security of Albertans. The bill updates provincial legislation to ensure Alberta has the mechanisms in place to prevent and respond to emergency situations. (Justice and Attorney General)
- **supported** the Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement (CEYE). This support will help Kainai youth attend and conduct research at a provincial conference promoting civic involvement. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
- **concluded** a disaster recovery program that is providing nearly \$1.1 million to help residents, small businesses and the municipality in the Edson area recover from uninsured losses due to overland flooding caused by heavy rainfall August 29, 2002. (Municipal Affairs)
- **conducted** seminars for municipalities and other waterworks and wastewater approval holders on topics dealing with water allocations and license transfers under the *Water Act*, drinking water protection, storm-water management, the compliance inspection program, wastewater treatment, monitoring of drinking water and electronic submittal of monitoring reports. (Environment)
- **announced** \$122 million worth of approved infrastructure projects in 69 Alberta communities through the Infrastructure Canada-Alberta Program (ICAP). (Transportation)
- **revised** the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board (EUB) Guide 29 to better assist members of the public who wish to participate in the regulatory hearing process regarding applications for proposed energy, resource, and utilities developments. (Energy)

- **provided** a grant for the Lesser Slave Lake Regional Police Service's crime correction awareness program. This program encourages youth at risk to stay in school and make positive life choices. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
- **announced** the crime prevention program ski check. Ski check offers tips to skiers and snowboarders to help prevent theft of their equipment during the ski season. (Solicitor General)
- **completed** 668 investigations related to consumer protection and recovered more than \$298,000 for Alberta consumers. (Government Services)
- **supported** numerous projects across the province through the Alberta Lottery Fund. Groups like the Nord-Bridge Senior Citizens Association (Senior Centre renovations - \$125,000), Enchant Community Association (Community Hall roof repair - \$43,800), Cardston Community Handi-Bus Association (Handi-bus purchase - \$35,000), and the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada - Central Alberta Chapter (program development - \$9,490) use lottery funding to offer programs and projects to benefit the lives of Albertans. (Gaming)
- **issued** nearly 1,400 charitable gaming event licences to volunteer-based community groups. In 2001-02, charitable gaming activities generated more than \$200 million for licensed organizations. (Gaming)
- **promoted** and participated in *Operation CleanFarm*. This program offers safe, responsible, and free disposal for chemicals used in farm operations. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development and Environment)
- **developed** a code of conduct for the Commissioners of the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission to ensure the human rights panel process remains fair and transparent. (Community Development)
- **announced** \$1 million in grants for training fire and emergency personnel as well as ground search and rescue volunteers. (Municipal Affairs)
- **completed** more than 6,100 inspections for compliance with liquor, gaming and tobacco legislation. (Gaming)
- **conducted** presentations on the *Protection for Persons in Care Act* to over 140 nursing attendant students, managers, Persons with Developmental Disabilities staff, and other government staff. (Community Development)
- **launched** Emergency Management Alberta as the branch responsible for crisis and consequence management in the province (replaces Alberta Disaster Services). (Municipal Affairs)
- **signed** a First Nations Training-to-Employment Partnership with Suncild First Nation Reserve for band members to receive training in early childhood development. (Human Resources and Employment)
- **began** implementation of the Workplace Safety 2.0 Initiative, a comprehensive strategy to reduce injuries and fatalities on Alberta worksites by 40% by 2004. (Human Resources and Employment)
- **contributed** to ongoing multi-agency Environmental Impact Assessments of 11 oilsands projects, two coal mining and two limestone quarry projects. (Sustainable Resource Development)

Protecting Alberta's Natural and Cultural Heritage

Albertans want to ensure Alberta's awe-inspiring natural beauty and rich cultural heritage is preserved for future generations. In the third quarter, the Alberta government:

- **published** a First Nations Traditional Use Studies Handbook. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
- **extended** the deadline for the Alberta Farm Water Program (AFWP) to help producers secure long-term water supplies. The AFWP will pay for one-third of development costs to a maximum of \$5,000 per producer. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **supported** the Heritage Community Foundation project *¾ Nature's Law: The Traditional Legal Codes of Alberta's First Nations*. This project will undertake research and create an educational Web site targeted at Kindergarten to Grade 12 students to promote and preserve Aboriginal languages, traditions and knowledge. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
- **participated** in the Athlone Elementary School's Aboriginal Days celebrations, providing insight into what it means to be an Aboriginal person in Alberta. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
- **awarded** \$586,120 in grants for 66 projects through the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation. These projects involved the restoration of historic buildings, educational initiatives, and research to uncover Alberta's past. (Community Development)
- **continued** to work with the University of Alberta, and the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute on developing science-based tools for better livestock odour management. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- **promoted** *Archives Week 2002*. Records archivists, at the Provincial Archives of Alberta, promoted events and worked with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to produce a quiz based on historical sound bites that were aired during the week. (Community Development)
- **initiated** a planning agreement to address mountain pine beetles and other issues in the Southwest Area with Banff National Park. (Sustainable Resource Development)
- **commemorated** the designation of Don Getty Wildland Provincial Park in Kananaskis Country. The park was established in 2001 at the conclusion of the Alberta Special Places program, a program designed to help protect Alberta's natural heritage for future generations. (Community Development)
- **conducted** formal enforcement actions regarding non-compliance of forest industry activities, non-compliance of public lands disposition regulations, and in response to wildlife poaching activities. (Sustainable Resource Development)

- **executed** a final agreement with the Piikani (Peigan) Nation and the federal government to settle litigation, claims and other issues regarding water and the impacts of the Oldman River Dam. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development)
- **legalized** crossbows for all hunting except for big game hunting during archery-only big game seasons and for waterfowl hunting. (Sustainable Resource Development)

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